

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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R 210950Z JUL 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8232
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5461

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, CASC, TU
SUBJECT: RESTRICTIONS ON ARMENIANS' ENTRY INTO TURKEY

1. RECENTLY THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATIONS THAT THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT MAY HAVE -- AT LEAST BRIEFLY -- PROHIBITED ENTRY INTO TURKEY BY ARMENIANS WITH OTHER THAN TURKISH PASSPORTS. TO ASSIST ADDRESSEES IN ANSWERING POTENTIAL QUESTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT, WE SET FORTH BELOW THE INFORMATION WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP.

A. ON JULY 10, LARGE CIRCULATION ISTANBUL DAILY GUNAYDIN REPORTED THAT PERSONS WITH ARMENIAN NAMES AND NON-TURKISH PASSPORTS WERE BEING REFUSED ENTRY INTO TURKEY ON ORDER OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. THE MINISTRY'S ORDER WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN A SECURITY MEASURE RELATED TO THE
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KILLINGS OF TURKISH DIPLOMATS AND TERRORIST ACTS IN ISTANBUL FOR WHICH SOME ARMENIAN GROUPS ALLEGEDLY HAD CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY. AN ARMENIAN COUPLE WITH CANADIAN PASSPORTS WERE SAID TO HAVE BEEN REFUSED ENTRY UNDER THIS ORDER.

B. EMBASSY QUERIED THE INTERIOR MINISTRY ON THE BASIS OF THIS ARTICLE AND, AFTER SOME DELAY, WAS TOLD THAT TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS HAD BEEN INITIATED BUT WERE BEING

REVIEWED WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT.

C. CONGEN ISTANBUL WAS TOLD BY A BRITISH COLLEAGUE THAT PROHIBITION OF ARMENIANS' ENTRY DID IN FACT EXIST. FRENCH COLLEAGUE STATED THAT THE PROHIBITION HAD BEEN IMPLEMENTED ONE WEEK EARLIER AND THAT THERE HAD BEEN SEVERAL CASES OF FRENCH NATIONALS OF ARMENIAN ORIGIN WHO HAD BEEN REFUSED ENTRY.

D. DCM CALLED ON AYDEN YEGEN, MFA WESTERN DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR, TO CALL ATTENTION TO SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES THAT WOULD FOLLOW A POLICY OF DENYING ENTRY REGARDLESS OF NATIONALITY. YEGEN STATED FLATLY NO SUCH RESTRICTIONS EXISTED; SUCH RESTRICTIONS ON ENTRY THAT DID EXIST, HE STATED, WERE THOSE COMMONLY PRACTICED BY ALL COUNTRIES, I.E., LISTS OF INDIVIDUALS AGAINST WHOM THERE WERE GROUNDS FOR REFUSING ENTRY, PLUS NORMAL GROUNDS FOR ELIGIBILITY. YEGEN NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT TURKEY WOULD CONTINUE SEEKING TO PROTECT ITSELF AGAINST ARMENIAN TERRORISM.

E. ON JULY 20, DAILY MILLIYET REPORTED THAT TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON THE ARMENIANS WITH FOREIGN PASSPORTS HAD BEEN RESCINDED FOLLOWING DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS BY FRENCH AND OTHERS. FONMIN OKCUN WAS CITED AS SAYING THAT RESTRICTIONS WERE REMOVED IN ACCORDANCE WITH BILATERAL VISA AGREEMENTS AND TURKEY'S COMMITMENT TO THE PRINCIPLE OF FREEDOM OF TRAVEL.

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